

240653Z May 05

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00
DOEE-00	PERC-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	
H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	CAC-00	
VCE-00	M-00	NEA-00	DCP-00	NRC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	
OES-00	OIC-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	GIWI-00	PRS-00	P-00	
FMPC-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	
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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1655
INFO AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
DARFUR COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USLO TRIPOLI
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 000835

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF, AF/C, AF/SPG, D, DRL, H, INR, INR/GGI, PRM, USAID/OTI AND USAID/W FOR DAFURRMT; LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICAWATCHERS; GENEVA FOR CAMPBELL, ADDIS/NAIROBI/KAMPALA FOR REFCOORDS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [KAWC](#) [CD](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: REFUGEES IN EASTERN CHAD: A LOOK AHEAD (PART II)

REF: A. NDJAMENA 814

[1B](#). NDJAMENA 834
[1C](#). NDJAMENA 742
[1D](#). NDJAMENA 740

Classified By: Political/Economic Officer Kathleen FitzGibbon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[11](#). (C) Summary: Bureau for Population, Migration, and Refugees Officers Margaret McKelvey and Hazel Reitz traveled to Chad from May 4 to 18 to conduct a periodic review of protection and assistance efforts in eastern Chad. This is the third of three cables from the visit. (Refs A and B). Some humanitarian assistance projects for local Chadian populations are now beginning, but the approaching rainy season is likely to constrain these efforts. Donors also need to consider assisting Chadians being displaced by cross-border attacks by jandjaweed and bandit groups. ICRC recently provided non-food items to 4,000 Chadians near Goz Beida. Given the recent violence in the camps, the civilian nature and neutrality of the camps is an increasingly important issue that has implications for Chad's willingness to host the Sudanese refugees. UNHCR's Director for Operations in Chad and Sudan Jean-Marie Fahkouri visited on May 17 to meet with Chadian officials, including President Deby, about UNHCR's operations the recent violence in the camps. Embassy, UNHCR, and PRM officials urged the rebel movements to maintain the civilian nature of the refugee camps. End Summary.

NO LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

[12](#). (C) Chadian President Idriss Deby lambasted UNHCR/Sudan's Director of Operations for Sudan and Chad Jean-Marie Fahkouri for creating a burden on the Chadian people and doing nothing to address it during a meeting on May 17. Deby told Fahkouri that UNHCR was responsible for discontent among the local people. (Comment: After the meeting, Fahkouri told us that Deby had not been properly briefed or that his ill-humor stemmed from his feeling of vulnerability. End Comment.) During a meeting with Ambassador Wall, P/E Officer, and PRM TDYers, Fahkouri attributed the refugee camp violence as symptoms of a not unexpected deterioration of the situation. Refugees had completed the first two phases of being a refugee: the first being their flight from Darfur and the second being the transfer to refugee camps for protection and assistance. Fahkouri noted that the refugees are now in phase three: where they see no light at the end of the tunnel and they become more militant in an attempt to regain what they have lost. These psychological stages need to be kept in mind.

ASSISTING AFFECTED CHADIANS

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13. (C) Deby's message is not new. In eastern Chad, the Sudanese refugees outnumber the local population at least 2 to 1 and in some places the ratio is greater. After absorbing the initial wave of refugees, many of whom were family members, the host population exhausted its meager resources. Now, the large concentration of refugees has taxed the extremely fragile environment, particularly water and firewood resources, to the breaking point. The deteriorating circumstances of the local population has spurred calls for material assistance for Chadians in the refugee zone. Although just beginning, more assistance is in the budgeting process, and more is needed. However, the rapidly approaching rainy season will limit its delivery. As reported in refs C and D, visiting Senator Corzine (D-NJ) viewed first-hand the need to assist Chad.

14. (U) UNHCR has begun some 53 generally small-scale projects amounting to a total value of some \$3 million to assist local Chadians; about half have been completed. The completed activities range from distribution of seeds and tools to rehabilitation of wells to animal vaccinations to repair of vehicles for the local authorities. A handful were specifically funded by bilateral donors such as ECHO, DFID, and AUSAID; most are being done by existing implementing

partners (i.e., no significant additional overhead) with funds contributed to UNHCR. IRC-procured equipment for the local referral hospital at Bahai and IMC support for the Guereda Hospital are in train. USAID/OFDA support for UNICEF resulted in the opening of offices in Goz Beida and in Iriba that will deal with assistance to Chadians once they are up and running. Reitz and McKelvey confirmed with UNICEF in Abeche and N'Djamena that almost all of UNICEF's efforts this year in water and sanitation will be focused on affected Chadians, not on refugees as they were over the last twelve months. WFP has committed to doing food for work projects, has done some, and has food available but is suffering from both a lack of implementing partners and a lack of staff time to work on development and management of FFWs.

15. (U) Some of the local frustration is the result of the benefits and the disadvantages of the international presence not accruing equally to the same people. For example, WFP's N'Djamena representative Stefano Poretti reports that WFP has had no trouble getting Chadian trucks to respond to WFP's calls for contracts. In contrast, the Libyan trucks sought were not/not materializing. Meanwhile, a local businessman reported to Embassy officer that the WFP and oil companies demand for trucks is pulling in all of the available trucks and leaving nothing reasonable for local business to use in moving its product.

16. (C) The French military could be another interesting potential source of funding for the local populations, even if only 20,000 Euros according to UNHCR/Abeche. PRM TYDers met with the head of a three-person team of the Actions Civilo-militaires unit. This is a force of 96 from among the various branches of the French armed forces, including gendarmes, that has existed since 2001. Captain (Navy air) Nathalie Fave's stated mission is to travel the border areas, ferret out information on current and potential local conflicts (including between refugees and locals), and undertake micro-projects to help ease those tensions. (Comment. A tall order for an assignment that lasts only four months, as do the deployments of all of the French troops at Camp Croci in Abeche. End comment.) Fave did similar work in Afghanistan and Cote d'Ivoire and had been in Chad last year to direct the French airlift in support of refugees. She is one (and the only female) of 13 officers at the base, she said.

17. (SBU) Unfortunately, in mounting programs for affected Chadians, most humanitarian players will conduct rapid, one-off activities. The humanitarian system cannot generally address the development needs of Chad and yet those needs are likely to endure just as long as the refugees' need for life-supporting assistance. As a result, the issue of affected Chadians will remain. In addition, internally-displaced Chadians are also a new factor to consider for assistance.

18. (SBU) Recommendations: Depending on the planning horizon selected, it might make sense for WFP to consider augmenting the local fleet of trucks. WFP might usefully do a cost/benefit analysis with several different assumptions. UNHCR should make every effort to enlist other elements of the UN family in addressing needs of Chadians, including those affected in some precise way by refugees and those whose desperate poverty has been more visible now that the international community has arrived in force to assist the refugees, driving local rents and food prices out of reach of most Chadians. If USAID/OFDA can get its projects for affected Chadians up and running to some extent before the

rains, that would be another opportunity to assuage the GOC's claims that the international community is not doing enough for the Chadians.

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A NEW PROBLEM: 4,000 INTERNALLY-DISPLACED CHADIANS
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¶9. (U) The first internally-displaced Chadians to be identified as victims of spillover of the Darfur conflict are to be assisted on a one-off basis by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Contingency planning should include the possibility of more such displacements. According to ICRC surveys the week of May 1, a total of some

4,000 Chadians have been displaced in the Ade area (near the border, northeast of Goz Beida) due to a number of attacks from unidentified Sudanese, either GOS-inspired jandjaweed or ordinary bandits. The GOC has deployed troops and maintains that the area is safe enough for people to return to their homes within Chad. However, the people are still too scared to go home.

¶10. (C) Two Belgian journalists visiting border villages in the Adre area (which is further to the north), told PRM TDYers on May 15 that Chadian villagers reported attacks from the Sudan side of the border every few days with loss of animals. The attackers are either jandjaweed or bandits, according to the villagers. ICRC considered a one-time distribution of food (small quantities, not a systematic ration as recommended by the ICRC field staff) and non-food items to the Ade area IDPs. The IDPs are destitute and the rains are coming, but ICRC ultimately decided to only distribute the non-food items, according to ICRC/N'Djamena director Thierry Ribaux. The distribution was conducted on May 13.

¶11. (SBU) ICRC is leery of anchoring the IDPs outside of their homes and will re-evaluate later whether any ongoing assistance would be necessary. (Comment: ICRC is reinforcing its presence/program in Chad, and has 13 internationals at present, which would be helpful if displacement of Chadians becomes more widespread and the international community becomes seized with what agency should be charged with addressing the needs of IDPs. End Comment.) PRM TDYers spoke with ICRC about the potential for a budget extension. In ICRC's set-up, the field staff do not have to get involved in budgetary questions to any great degree beyond signaling needs. It is not yet clear whether the increased needs will surpass the 10 percent "borrowing authority" available to ICRC. Note that the Chad delegation is now a stand-alone one (since January 2005) with a separate budget from that of ICRC/Sudan.

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MAINTAINING REFUGEE CAMP NEUTRALITY
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¶12. (C) The issue of the humanitarian nature and neutrality of the refugee camps continues to bedevil UNHCR. In a meeting with Fahkouri on May 17, UNHCR officials, PRM TDYers, and embassy officials, Sudanese Liberation Movement and Justice and Equality Movement members admitted that they visit their families who are in the refugee camps. However, they claim their members are told to leave their weapons at their bases prior to traveling. Rebel leaders must obtain permission from the Chadian Minister of Public Security in order to visit the camps. The N'Djamena-based leaders have respected this regulation. Lower-ranking members do not need permission. UNHCR urged the SLM and JEM to be diligent about notifying Chadian authorities.

¶13. (C) The violence in the camps on May 9 and 10 is indicative of the high level of frustration and the vulnerability of the refugees to manipulation. The precipitating events for the violence at Goz Amer and the Touloum, Iridimi, Mile, and Kounoungou camps over re-registration and food distribution were unrelated. However, there may be a common factor. Rumors continue to circulate that these types of events are being stirred up by Sudanese agents provocateurs in the camps. The alleged Sudanese agents reportedly want to stir up enough trouble to convince local authorities that the refugees should not be allowed to remain in Chad. A return of some refugees to Sudan would bolster the GOS's claims that the situation in Darfur is improving, according to Fahkouri.

¶14. (C) The civilian nature of the camps will continue to be problematic. Embassy, PRM, and UNHCR officers all made strong representations to the SLM and JEM representatives to keep the camps free of military influence. In addition, the rebel movement members were urged to persuade the refugees in Touloum to sign a letter of apology and to permit resumption of all services. (Note: In negotiations with the refugees in the aftermath of the violence, local authorities requested

the refugee leaders to sign a letter recognizing the authority of the Chadian authorities to maintain order and to

apologize for the attacks on the gendarmes and humanitarian workers. The leaders at Iridimi agreed to sign the letter. Touloum camp remains the only hold-out. End Comment.)

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COMMENT
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15. (C) President Deby's lashing out at Fahkouri is indicative of his growing frustration with deleterious impact of the refugee crisis on the local population and Chad's security. The recent violence highlighted the need for a better understanding of the refugee camp leaders and the forces influencing them. Chadian officials miss no opportunity to highlight the plight of the host population, which has borne an incredible burden. We note, however, the presence of the Sudanese refugees also represents an opportunity for Chad to address and to get donor support for meeting the needs of its own neglected population. Chad already is starting to benefit from the infusion of external project funds to ameliorate the situation, but Chadian officials also need to assure the sustainability of these projects over the long-term when the crisis ends.

16. (U) Khartoum and Tripoli Minimize Considered.
WALL

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